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DEPT FOR AF/C, CA/VO/L/C, CA/VO/L/A, CA/VO/F/P, L/CA, AF/E, DRL

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [CVIS](#) [PREF](#) [RW](#)

SUBJECT: SAO NOT NECESSARY FOR RWANDANS WISHING TO TRAVEL TO US

REF: A. 94 STATE 285528

[B](#). 96 STATE 217393

[C](#). 98 STATE 160376

[1](#). SUMMARY. AmEmbassy Kigali and the government of Rwanda concur in a recommendation to end the current requirement in ref A that Embassies and Consulates submit SAO clearances on all Rwandans born before 1981 who are applying outside of Kigali for NIV's, IV's, refugee status or other travel documents, regardless of the visa classification requested. As an alternative to the SAO, the Rwandan Prosecutor General has provided Post a list of Rwandans who are wanted by the GOR for involvement in the genocide. Post proposes that this list be loaded into the Consular Consolidated Database (CCD). END SUMMARY.

[2](#). The purpose of the current SAO process is to prevent Rwandans wanted for genocide crimes from receiving visas to enter the United States. However, the current SAO process has led to extensive delays in the issuance of visas to Rwandans living outside Rwanda. It has also meant additional time-consuming work for Embassy Kigali, other US Embassies and the GOR. The clearance process has impeded last minute travel for important dignitaries, including, in are recent example, the Rwandan Ambassador to Switzerland. The elimination of the SAO requirement would improve customer service for the end applicant and improve the efficiency of the adjudication process for Rwandan applicants. The Rwandan government has suggested the removal of this requirement and post fully concurs.

[3](#). Post and GOR concur that there is a viable alternative to the current SAO process that would still meet the goal of preventing Rwandans wanted for genocide crimes from receiving permits to enter the US. The GOR has developed and provided to Post a list of suspected genocidaires that are living outside Rwanda. Loading these names directly into the CCD would make them available to consular officers in real time during interviews, eliminating the need for a SAO clearance cable to be sent to Kigali. Post requests Department concurrence to put this change into effect and notify all posts of this new procedure.

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